GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1432
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2016
Protection of Wetlands
Khuba Shri Bhagwanth

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the species count in the country has gone down by 15%;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken any urgent steps to protect wetlands across the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise along with the action plan in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a)& (b) Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), the research organizations under the Ministry, carry out taxonomic, systematic and exploration surveys and studies of flora and fauna in the country respectively. The faunal diversity studies carried out in India by ZSI have not shown any evidence of loss of faunal species at 15% rate, though there are indications of depletion of population abundance of species. As per the data available with the BSI, out of 19,156 species of vascular plants so far recorded from the country, 1236 species belong to different threatened categories like Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable, etc. These organizations have informed that there is no specific data available or studies carried out by them which establish that the species count in India has gone down by 15 percent.

(c) & (d) For conservation and management of identified wetlands in the country, the scheme of National Wetlands Conservation Programme (NWCP) was implemented till the year 2012-13. To have better synergy and to avoid overlap, the NWCP has been merged in February, 2013 with another scheme of National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) into a new integrated scheme of 'National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems' (NPCA) for holistic conservation of lakes and wetlands, which is operational on cost sharing basis between the Central and State Governments. Under the scheme, financial assistance has been provided to the State Governments/Union Territories for undertaking wetland conservation activities like survey & demarcation, catchment area treatment, desilting & dredging, bio-fencing, fisheries development, weed control, biodiversity conservation, pollution abatement, education & awareness and community participation etc. So far, since 1987-88 an amount of Rs.146.94 crore has been released for undertaking various conservation activities in 82 identified wetlands under NWCP / NPCA, as per State-wise details given in Annexure. Further, to regulate certain activities within the designated wetlands, the Government of India has notified the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules in December, 2010.

In order to conserve wetlands and lakes in an integrated manner, all the States/ Union Territories have been advised for giving high priority for constitution of State wetland/ lake authorities, identification and notification of priority wetlands including delineation of their boundaries, development of integrated management plans, securing resources for implementation of management plans, monitoring and evaluation, strengthening research-management interface, etc.

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